VIEWING THE WORLD AS AN ORGANISM

WORLD ORDER

CIVIL STRIFE
Editorial

PUBLIC OPINION AND WORLD PEACE
HUGH M. WOODWARD

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS
HELEN BISHOP AND FLORENCE E. PINCHON

UNFOLDMENT OF WORLD CIVILIZATION, IV
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WORLD ORDER

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CIVIL STRIFE

EDITORIAL

No human condition is more tragic and appalling than that of civil war. The history even of warfare has its moral and ethical heights and depths; for the determined defense of a people whose country has been wantonly invaded possesses elements of justice which are recognized and acclaimed by the common sense of mankind. All the destructive and degrading factors of bloodshed, however, seem multiplied when the strife arises between family and family, neighbor and neighbor of the same fatherland.

For in this case the savage contestants speak the same language, share a common culture and have joined in mutual worship at the same altar. By the bonds of custom, education, tradition and economic interest, by the bonds of a political and social civilization achieved by mutual effort over a long period, as by the common benefit they have received from the same heroic leaders in the past, they have been associated together on one land and under one sky, whence their struggles, their violence and their hatred seem to be a breaking of elemental human pledges such as those which unite husband and wife, father and son, brother and brother.

What an inward decay of fundamental spiritual values must have been operating for generations to have destroyed all these common bonds and reduced the contestants to the extremity of murder and of pillage! How hollow the faith, how superficial the religious practice, if its final result is to produce the most savage enmity where every human consideration requires sympathy, understanding and instinctive cooperation! At what point in their historic experience did their religion cease to be of God and begin to reflect the ambitions and tyrannies of men? Why have unsolvable economic problems arisen unless, throughout previous ages, worship itself was imbued with social injustice so acute as to divide the interest of city and country, of worker and owner, of churchman and layman? Civil war is not

thrust upon a people from any external source—it falls as the bitter fruit of the tree of their own community experience.

The essential meaning of civil war is that it proves the absence of any mutually accepted and reverenced higher authority whose arbitration can reconcile claims and interests before they have come to the breaking point. Civil war cries to the heavens that among its victims no reconciler and no interpreter exists. Naught exists among the majority but the ruthlessness of the savage, which slays that it be not itself slain.

But civil war at this point in human history—civil war raging in the very heart of what has been regarded as the most advanced civilization—is more even than a blood-stained tomb erected to one nation's faith and hope. It is the true symbol, in miniature, of the fundamental conditions prevailing throughout the greater portion of the world today. What Spain does today, the world can and must do tomorrow, unless the nations extirpate those irreconcilable extremes of interest and human value which are bringing one people to the abyss of ruin.

On all sides it is said at this hour that whichever faction wins, the result is the destruction of the nation engaged in civil strife. How can any nation, or alliance of nations, hope to obtain any different result from that larger and more destructive civil strife which modern international warfare essentially is? Let us look steadily at this tragic spectacle of fratricide, because it but anticipates by a brief time the final conflict of a Europe whose organized oppositions are far more extreme and far more determined and far more ruthless than those which came to inevitable fulfilment in the little family of Spain.

What wonder that the hope of progress, even of continued existence, has fled from those darkened shores to the new continent in the West? What wonder that a new spirit of anxious cooperation and mutual planning has begun to animate the peoples and nations of the Americas? The initiative of civilization has passed from Europe to America, as ages ago it passed from a palsied Orient to Europe itself. It is for the American peoples, whatever their racial origin and ethnical experience, to realize their fateful responsibility and consciously assume the mission of establishing that social justice, that true organic unity, upon which the pillars of the necessary new world order must firmly stand.

H. H.

PUBLIC OPINION AND WORLD PEACE*

By Hugh M. Woodward

Walter Lippman said the other day:

"Just as the proof of the pudding is to eat it, so the proof of successful neutrality is to stay out of war. This sounds obvious enough. Yet the fact is that the United States has never in its history managed to avoid being drawn into a general European war. Invariably we begin by declaring our neutrality, and end by participating in the war."

To what extent will our extensive program of education for peace succeed? What are the chief reasons why we have failed in the past? How is it that the war spirit can sweep over the country within a few months at a time when the masses are in possession of facts and settled convictions which would seem sufficient to make war impossible? In 1913 our apostles of peace told us there could be no war; "the social conscience is too enlightened," they said. "The nations know they cannot afford it. The world is in possession of too many facts concerning the horrors and losses of war, war is therefore impossible." In a few months, men in Europe would have killed their own fathers in spite of their facts and settled conclusions.

If I begin my address with a statement which seems to be a challenge to those who are depending on education to guarantee peace, I trust you will not think me unappreciative of the great possibilities in the educational program to preserve peace, or that I am unmindful of the many peace agencies now at work. The failure of the sponsors of peace has been due largely to the fact that they have exerted most of their energy in building up an enlightened social conscience through a program of education rather than seeking to control emotional public opinion by controlling the agencies used to stimulate the war psychology. Much of their effort has been lost because of failure to recognize the radical difference between an enlightened social conscience and an emotional public opinion and also their failure to realize that this emotional public opinion can be aroused in groups where the social conscience is most enlightened.

The great success of the war prop-

*An address delivered before the National Educational Association at Portland, Oregon, July 2, 1936. Dr. Woodward is President of the Utah Education Association.

agandist has been due to the fact that he has done what he could to influence the social conscience in his direction, but has depended upon high-powered stimuli to arouse this emotional public opinion. The social conscience is made up of established ideals, traditions, beliefs, customs, prejudices, bodies of scientific fact, institutions, and settled convictions. It is thoughtful, conservative, and unemotional. It represents the level of human feeling and thinking to which the pendulum swings back after the excitement of any event has cleared away.

On the other hand, public opinion is shifting; it comes and goes. It is made up largely of heavy emotional response to some particular situation. It is a more driving force than the calm and deliberate social conscience. In its intensive forms it represents a cyclone of energy which sweeps over the settled conclusions and the thought-out convictions of the social conscience and pushes them so far into the background that they fail to operate. Public opinion is made up largely of dynamic energy moving toward a definite goal. Its intensity depends upon the power of the stimulating agent to arouse emotional activity and at the same time to prevent clear and dispassionate thinking. It is possible that somewhere in the world there are groups who are never moved by this emotionalism, but in my own state we had some interesting examples of this shifting public opinion. In 1915 wise University professors told how Wilson had kept us out of war and how he was backed by the thoughtful conclusions of the entire educational world. Two years later the same faculty with all the student body stood in front of the state University and sang those two "highly thoughtful" war time classics, "What the Hell do we care," and "We won't come back 'til it's over, over there." This illustrates how helpless the social conscience is in the face of the emotional public opinion when the latter is aroused by profound and constant stimuli. We first marched in great parades for peace and later the same people with still more intense feeling marched to the call of war.

In 1918, when Woodrow Wilson talked in the great tabernacle at Salt Lake City, we were all for the League of Nations. Three years later, a man would have been in danger of being stoned if he even so much as mentioned the League. And thus goes the shifting course of public opinion. During all these changes, the social conscience remained the same. We were in possession of the same facts, we had the same general traditions, the same habits of life; the secret of the change in public opinion was due to the stimulation of our emotional natures. Our social conscience lacked sufficient detail of the facts to protect us against the insiduous and unsuspected stimulation.

The fact that the feeling of man goes much deeper in his life habits than does his thinking, is a great handicap to the peace forces. Feeling is easy to arouse, thinking is slow and difficult with the masses,

especially in the presence of heavy stimuli. Consequently, the enlightened social conscience allows powerful organized forces a free and unrestricted hand to stimulate the masses when these forces decide to produce an attitude of war. We must face hard facts and human nature. The selfish organized forces with their effective stimulating agencies can sweep over the deliberate thinking of our most enlightened communities and push reason into the background so far that men will want to fight their own brothers for some cause which has never been clearly thought through.

History over and over has taught us that war is not a question of the intelligence of a community or of the information and settled convictions which the community voices concerning war, but rather a question of organizing the selfish forces and the kind of instruments they are capable of wielding to stimulate an emotional response. Men go to war because they feel strongly and do their thinking afterward. It is our hope of course, that with enough education to enlighten the social conscience, it will some day be impossible for emotion to sweep aside the thought-out convictions of clear thinking. But whatever the future holds for the success of our educational program, at present the average individual has not reached this state of poise and thoughtfulness.

TODAY our war forces are better organized than those of peace, they have pointed and definite objectives, a deep selfish interest motivates their activities. The peace forces are not so well organized; their objectives are to a large extent nonpersonal and altruistic, and it takes unusual altruism to match a little selfishness when it comes to moving men to action. Among these powerful organized agencies, we might list the following: first, manufacturers of munitions of war; second, international bankers, who build up great fortunes by pitting one country against another to produce a condition where the people will bleed themselves dry in a process of borrowing money from these banks; third, domestic banks involved in manufacturing of munitions and in the control of materials that are utilized during the war; fourth, the militarists of each nation, consisting in the main of the entire army and navy personnel, who permit themselves to be worked into a frenzy; and, fifth, nations already at war that decide to bring other nations in to fight their battles.

These powerful selfish groups are in virtual control of the most effective stimulating agencies. Among these agencies we can list: first, the authorized dictators in charge of programs during a crisis; second, the profit-minded newspapers and magazine owners who are willing to print anything for money and greater circulations; third, the radio, whose freedom is limited virtually only by the ability to purchase the service; fourth, the picture shows, which have almost become a public utility, but which are owned and controlled for private profit. This combination of interests and agencies of stimulation is irre-

sistible if allowed the free hand until the crisis is on.

If the proponents of peace are to succeed in the near future, we must fight for the control of the weapons used by the war propagandist and prevent these war propagandists from using these weapons in time of a crisis. This control of certain stimulating devices and the prevention of their use by war agencies can be accomplished only by legislation in time of peace. It is the only way it can be accomplished. In time of peace the people are willing and able to think; in time of a crisis, they feel and act. We must lay more stress upon a program of legislation to prevent the use of these agencies which the war propagandist uses to influence the public mind.

Last winter, Smedley D. Butler pointed out that there is a powerful organization in this country deliberately attempting to work our young people up to a war frenzy. The number of picture shows exhibiting war-time scenes has increased greatly during the last year and a half. Many of these are deliberate concoctions to give the boy a desire to get into the fray. During peace time the proponents of peace should let the owners of picture shows know in no uncertain terms that this kind of propaganda is highly objectionable.

The neutrality law passed in the last congress shows what can be done and what its effect will be. But for this neutrality law the country would now be flooded with many kinds of war propaganda. Many other limitations could be put on this cleverly devised and insidious stimulation. Without violating the right of free speech, a program of legislation can be worked out which will greatly lessen the use of these high-powered stimuli employed by the war forces to produce a public opinion in favor of war. This convention should not close without appointing a committee to formulate definite legislative proposals to curb war propaganda agencies.

I REPEAT, that the enlightened social conscience is never a successful match for emotional opinion so long as the social conscience allows the war forces a free and unrestricted hand to stimulate war psychology.

If the above analysis of the social conscience and the public opinion is correct, then it would seem that our hope for immediate results lies along two possible paths; first, in a program to curb the war propagandists in their use of the powerful stimulating agencies used to inflame public opinion; second, in a program to utilize the same and other agencies in an attempt to produce and sustain public opinion in favor of peace.

We must develop an enlightened social conscience that will be a match for emotional public opinion. We can do this only by making our detail so clear and so complete that the child is fortified against the onslaught of misrepresentation. This means courage on the part of the educational profession to discuss these things fearlessly with our students. We must indict the wrong doers in the court of the child's mind and let the future deliver the verdict.

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS

London, England, July 3-18, 1936

I

By Helen Bishop

Complexions and costumes varied when Hindus, Buddhists, followers of Confucius, Jews, Christians, Muslims, Bahá'ís, scientists and philosophers assembled in London from July third to the eighteenth under the honorable presidency of His Highness The Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda and the able chairmanship of Sir Francis Younghusband. His Brittanic Majesty's government gave a reception for the Congress, at Lancaster House. Other receptions and teas encouraged sociability. The Dean of St. Paul's held a service there; and a visit was paid to Canterbury Cathedral, afterwards there was tea in the garden with the Dean.

At the daily sessions, ministers of state, dignitaries of church, mystics and free-lance writers read their papers before the galaxy of minds as a lead to free discussion of the one theme in symposium. To be sure, a few debaters were overburdened with their own persuasions; however, the greater company understood that the Congress was there to grapple with a problem—that same problem of association in unity which concerns individuals and confronts society as oppression and war.

Science as here represented, welcomes reconciliation with religion—though not by easy-going compromises with truth: religion must rise from the ashes of superstitions and fallacies, and abandon the prejudices engendered therefrom. Science has made its contribution to world unity by the internationalization of news, commerce and transportation. What are the religions going to do about it? Upon the reply depends our survival. In spite of the Communist who hailed science as a messiah, 1936 unmasks science the magician with bombs and lethal gas concealed in the sleeve.

The proceedings of the Congress[1] prove that inter-religious fel-

1—Published. Arthur Jackman, secretary, "World Fellowship of Faiths", 17 Bedford Square, London W.C.1.

lowship is in accord with the spirit of faith under any of its true Names, and that, today, liberated minds in all religions welcome a universal friendship. ". . . . but they always did", comes from the cynic. Right. Confucius taught: "Within the four seas all men are brothers." The Japanese sage, Teitaro Suzuki, appeared at the Congress as a living scroll bearing witness to one verse of Truth —Buddhism's part in wiping out ignorance by enlightenment—and we recognized a first-rate Buddhist monk and St. Francis of Assisi as twins. The testimony of free souls pours down the centuries and swells the world's literature, yet, still the chastened and the free enjoy the urbanity of the citizen of Heaven and are pitied as aliens of earth.

Mindful of Dean Inge's sheep, which passed an order in favor of vegetarianism — while the wolves were of a contrary opinion—the Congress held an extra session and formulated ways and means to persuade orthodoxy at home.

A non-sectarian Christian lost his antipathy against Islám before the kindliness and sanity of Sir Abdul Qadir's presentation. At a loss to account for his previous opposition, the Christian demanded, "If the pure teachings of every religion bring us together, then what keeps us apart?"

A Bahá'í would meet the question equipped with the Master's incisive view of the primary and spiritual basis, as distinct from the secondary and material law in each sacred Book. The primary aspect is *Logos,* the logic of the universe, the unassailable Reality, "the changeless Faith of God". Notwithstanding, the application of Truth to affairs is valid for a cycle only, inasmuch as time makes given customs, social laws and institutions unsuitable, useless, even destructive. In our epoch, to appease the requirements of world-culture, liberalism is struggling with orthodoxy for abrogation of early laws which stand as barriers to *the oneness of mankind.*

Examples are suggested by Hinduism and Judaism though the formal sessions did not treat specific cases of transition. In parenthesis, it was pointed that Aryan and Semetic are the two main branches of the tree of Religion: the Indo-Iránian roots have given to mankind, Hinduism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism; out of the Semitic roots came Judaism, Christianity, Islám. The Aryan accent falls upon the spiritual awakening of man [Nature]; whereas the Semitic proclaims the Revelation of God [Logos].

Going back. Professor Sir Radhakrishnan's eloquence came with inspired force to contribute Hinduism's gift to fellowship by its accent upon the oneness of spirit animating the universal life. Now, one remembers the material law which sets the problem of fellowship for orthodoxy, namely, the caste system, the prohibition for Brahman to break bread with non-Brahman even though he be also Hindu.

Also not on the formal program is this instance. Israel, as the custodian of monotheism, was given laws of endogamy and self-sufficiency designed to safeguard its divine trust during the precarious infancy and youth of the race. Its historic mission has been

the preservation of the sacred from the profane: Israel was promised an ultimate power to redeem non-Jews and make of them also "the children of the Father (Spirit)". This was accomplished when Jesus gave the Gospel to the non-Jews or Gentiles: His original declaration, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" culminated in the imperative, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations. . . ."![2]

Jesus was concerned for the individual in his relationship to God and to man. Inasmuch as the Gospels exalt the Love principle, expressed as hope, faith, charity or forgiveness, the Christian who lives by these judges not but gives his hand. In this connection, the Church of Rome's tradition was served by Professor Massignon's high scholarship. The Reformation or Genevan High Churchmanship found an evangelical voice in a Cambridge college President, who borrowed a title and "the tragic sense of life" from the blessed Saint Augustine. The Cambridge modern built his "City of God" with classic perfection and a realist's power. However, the conviction of the uniquely miraculous Manifestation of Christ offers to non-Christians,—conversion and church membership as the fellowship.

THE Prophet Muhammad's accent falls upon Justice: Islám constitutes the social laws and institutions of a theocratic and totalitarian state. Narrow religiosity and mediocre schooling keeps the west unware that Islám has given and still gives fellowship and fraternity, with a singular absence of snobbery over color and class, to those who make *submission* (i.e. Islám) unto it.

Thus, religion advanced through mysticism to theocracy; and, in the Bahá'í Cycle (1844) religion was declared not as church or state—but religion as society. In this day, "The people of a Book" and the-people-without-a-Book are submerged in the everlasting Mercy. The spirited behest of Bahá'u'lláh is to, "Associate with all the people of religions with joy and fellowship. For association is the cause of unity, and unity, is the source of order in the world." The form of society is described as the laws and institutions of God's Commonwealth.

Although the Bahá'í Faith is a thousand years younger than its Sisters, it bears evidences of the selection and continuity of family traits. The Prophet and Herald, Seyyid 'Alí Muhammad called The Báb (Gate) came out of the lineage of Abraham through Muhammad; and the Prophet-Founder Bahá'u'lláh (Glory of God) traced descent from the Zoroastrian kings. Thus, by alliance, an old family feud is abolished; and the Semitic and Aryan religions find a historic basis of reconciliation.

More of that history was not related, though its concatenation of dramatic episodes enact the renunciation and rapture which make religion the master passion of life. For world fellowship is of the temper of Sir Herbert Samuel's advices to the Congress; "Let not the religions be too historic in their claims. It has been wittily said that no one may walk backwards into the future. The

2—Matthew Xv 24; xxviii, 19.

religions must show they are alive today."

As High Commissioner for Palestine during the last years of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, Sir Herbert Samuel graciously accepted the chair when, on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, a paper was read entitled, "Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan of World Fellowship."

Speakers affirmed that Bahá'í is not merely an argument for interreligious fellowship: Bahá'í Faith is a World Community of eight hundred units extant in forty countries, wherein the heirs of all the great religious traditions are learning to practise world loyalty as a mandate from God. None of the cultural bonds of association, such as race, language, nation, brought the Bahá'í world into oneness for it has not these in common. From the ends of the earth, out of the East and the West, Israel and Islám, Persia and America, black and white, Christendom—Roman Catholic and Protestant, men, women, children answer the command of God's Messenger: *"Speed ye from your sepulchres!"*

Now, as ever the collective consciousness is religious. Bahá'í is not eclecticism nor syncretism, but spiritual revival on the world scale proclaimed by the Word. For the Word bears the Judgment and confers the Resurrection: the promised Cycle of the race's maturity is now. Cosmopolitanism inculcates fellowship, but unity is the power of the Word of God as it establishes the essential *oneness of mankind.* "Today, no power save the power of the Word of God can achieve it!", affirms 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

II

By Florence E. Pinchon

In these great days of fateful decisions and frustrated hopes, with the clouds of anxiety ever deepening over the world, the World Congress of Faiths, recently held in London, came like a glimpse of heaven's own blue, to lighten the weary hearts of those who still dare to believe in the ultimate triumph of spiritual forces over the menacing powers of darkness.

The Congress was attended by distinguished men and women drawn from many parts of the world, and representative of most of the leading Faiths, and of independent religious thought, and also by a number of those whose names are well-known in the realms of science, philosophy and literature.

The sessions comprised four public meetings held at the Queen's Hall, and a series of twenty papers, with speeches and discussions, which were preceded by devotional meetings, held in the beautiful hall of University College, Gower Street. The sense of need for that fellowship

which was the keynote of the Congress was further evidenced in the invitations extended to the delegates by various religious communities and in the welcome accorded to them at the services at St. Paul's and Canterbury Cathedrals; while at the social functions, opportunity was given for intimate personal contact between those who, widely sundered by racial, religious and mental outlook, were now animated by one common aim and purpose.

This ultimate aim and purpose might be summed-up in a single sentence: "To unite the inspiration of all Faiths upon the solution of man's present problems." And herein lies the recognition of a great fact, so clearly emphasized in the Bahá'í teachings, and hitherto so persistently ignored by those who hold positions of responsibility, that the disease from which humanity is suffering is at root a spiritual one, demanding a spiritual remedy. "Mankind," it was agreed, "is crying out for peace. But there can be no true and lasting peace until we get down to the very roots of the present world unrest, and quicken into more active life that feeling of fellowship which through all appearances to the contrary, is ever latent in the hearts of men. To intensify this sense of fellowship is, then, the main aim of the Congress. Since only those of profound spiritual insight are capable of arousing this feeling, such people are being brought together from many lands."

How vividly such an ideal recalls to our minds the illumined counsels of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and reveals the growth of that spiritual seed which will ultimately fulfil the prophecies of Bahá'u'lláh:

"All nations shall become one in faith, and all men as brothers, the bonds of affection and unity between the sons of men shall be strengthened; diversity of religion shall cease, and differences of race be annulled."

There was enough to stir the imagination even in the contrasting appearance and picturesque attire of the delegates. Prominent among them appeared the sturdy figure and blue turban of the International President, H. H. the Maharaja Gaekwar of Baroda; the black or white tunics and colored turbans of distinguished Hindus and members of the Council of India, with the graceful sari of a wife or daughter, side by side with the simple elegance of Dame Elizabeth Cadbury of Quaker fame, or some of the English and American ladies. One noted the tall figure and flowing white headdress of the Sheik-Rector of Cairo's famous Moslem University; the blue robes of Buddhists from Japan and Ceylon, with Dr. Suzuki, an exponent of Buddhist Philosophy, who had come from his university at Kyoto in order to attend the Congress. Dr. Kagawa, known as the "Christian Apostle of Japan" was also present, and the slight form and delicate humor of Dr. Hsiung, author of the Chinese play "Lady Precious Stream," added a note of gaiety. Progressive Judaism was represented by the Rev. Israel Mattuck, first leader of the Liberal Jewish Movement, and Dr. Judah Magnes, President of the Hebrew University,

Jerusalem. Madame Halidé Edib, the well-known writer and worker for the emancipation of Turkish women was also present, and Mons. Berdiaeff, who has suffered exile from, and religious persecution in Russia, and who represented the Greek Orthodox Church; the Rev. J. S. Whale, President of Cheshunt College, Cambridge, a highly esteemed Nonconformist, and the energetic Vicar of Christ Church, Westminster and Director of the Industrial Christian Fellowship; while it seemed only natural to see the white cap of Professor Das Gupta; who has represented India at so many world congresses; and moving among them all, as their chairman and inspiring spirit, appeared the white hair and ruddy countenance of Sir Francis Younghusband.

One could imagine the smile of all-embracing love which 'Abdu'l-Bahá would have bestowed—nay, was indeed bestowing—upon such an assembly, such a varied nosegay of flowers from his Father's garden, flowers redolent with the fragrance of fellowship and understanding.

Sir Francis Younghusband, soldier, statesman, pioneer traveler, and the author of many beautiful books, yet describes this Congress as "the greatest adventure" of his long and arduous career of seventy-three years. "I honestly believe," he said, "that it is the greatest thing happening in the world at present. . . . We are trying to set up a body of opinion which will form the spiritual basis of a new world order. . . . We have taken as our theme, World Fellowship through Religion, and we shall get every speaker to tell us what his religion has to say for the promotion of this ideal. Out of this discussion we hope for the intensification of fellowship which will be a solid contribution to the cause of world peace."

The Congress also received the benefit of the presence of the Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert Samuel, and of his wise and statesmanlike counsels. At the opening meeting at Queens's Hall, he said that the Congress sought to impress upon the churches the imminence of the great perils with which humanity is confronted and the urgent need for some common action. He advised the delegates not to dwell too much upon ancient historical background,—"no one can walk backwards into the future"—but to be prepared to cast aside old hindrances to mutual understanding, and to human welfare and progress.

Naturally, for Bahá'ís, the chief point of interest lay in their own session, which was held on the morning of July 16th. The golden-brown hall of the University, with its mellow light, provided a soft and pleasing setting, while we were fortunate in having Sir Herbert Samuel as chairman.

Sir Herbert opened his address by observing that the Bahá'í Faith was more fully in harmony with the basic ideas of the Congress than any of those represented. A brief, but masterly summary of the outlines of the Cause, of the erection of the Temple of Unity in Chicago, and of its adherents which now comprised some

800 communities, was followed by a personal reference to his friendship with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, during the time when he occupied the position of High Commissioner in Palestine, and acted as representative of the King at the moving scenes which attended the Master's funeral.

THEN the Rev. George Townshend read the able paper that he had written for the occasion, and which had been submitted to the approval of Shoghi Effendi, "Bahá'u'lláh's Ground Plan for World Fellowship."[3] As it will, no doubt, be fully reported elsewhere, it is only necessary to add that, conciliatory both in tone and substance, it was listened to with deep attention. Here indeed appeared a clear gospel of reconciliation, and a broad, basic plan for the establishing of world unity and a nobler civilization!

Mrs. Charles Bishop, in a few telling sentences, and in a voice of singular clarity and sweetness, reminded the delegates that the Bahá'í Faith was younger by a thousand years than any of theirs; that it possessed a remarkable history; and that the two Prophets of God through whom its message had been delivered had combined in their ancestry three of the great religions. The Báb traced His descent from Muhammad; Bahá'u'lláh, on His mother's side received a Jewish heritage, and on His father's side that of ancient Zoroastrian kings. It had been pointed out that mystical experience in all ages had been, fundamentally, in accord. The Bahá'í Faith taught both the immanence and the transcendence of God. Its aim was to break down all barriers. It counselled its followers to "associate with all peoples with joy and fragrance, for fellowship is the cause of unity, and unity the source of order in the world." The address was concluded by a quotation from the writings of Shoghi Effendi: "The Cause of Bahá'u'lláh is primarily directed against all forms of provincialism, all insularities and prejudices . . ."

Mr. R. St. Barbe Baker, the Founder of the society known as the "Men of the Trees," brought to his remarks a breath of the open air and of practical life. He told of his meeting with Shoghi Effendi in Palestine, and how his society came into being there, the latter giving his warm support to the work of tree-planting. He reminded the assembly that the Fourteen Points of President Wilson were founded upon Bahá'u'lláh's Plan for World Peace, although two of the points had been omitted and he had failed to acknowledge the source of his inspiration. He concluded by stressing the truth that, however dark the outlook, the world lay beneath the sovereignty of God, and repeated the favorite prayer of the Báb:

"Is there any remover of difficulties save God! Say, praise be to God! He is God! All are His servants and all are standing by His commands."

The rich, dramatic tones of Mme. Barry Orlova served to rouse the audience to an almost startled attention, as she asked "What is the sepulchre?" explaining that it was the limiting of humanity in the denial of God and His Manifestations. To deny one Prophet is to deny all

3—To be published in the November, 1936 issue of World Order.

Prophets. These had ever been sent to awaken the souls of men and bring to them a re-birth and spiritual resurrection.

Mr. Frank Hearst, a social and industrial worker from Leeds, bore testimony to the supreme satisfaction he had at last found in a religion which combined spirituality with the new ideals of social, economic, industrial, national and international reform, with the establishing of a new world order.

At the close of the meeting, the dainty booklets, "The Divine Secret of Human Civilization" were freely distributed. These had been compiled and printed by Miss J. Storey of Geneva, who whispered en passant, "The idea of this Congress was born at Haifa."

SURELY Bahá'í friends everywhere will share with those of us who were present at these gatherings, a release of the spirit, an uplifting sense of joy and fulfilment, in that yet another stone has been well and truly laid in the rising Temple of Unity which is destined to one day adorn the new City of God.

Looking back on the various deliberations of this Congress, one seems to have been left with three outstanding impressions. The first is, what an abundance of spiritual treasures all religions have to bring to the rich market of Truth, and offer for mutual appreciation. Secondly, how remarkably the social work and ideals of progressive Christianity are coming into harmony with Bahá'í principles. Lastly, how utterly inadequate is any religion of the past to face up to and provide a solvent for the woes of these modern times. Herein the Bahá'í Faith bore witness to its divine source and inspiration, in that it could enfold all in the arms of an understanding love, provide a common meeting ground for all, and stand forth like some glorious planetary searchlight to guide humanity across the dark ocean of perplexity to a haven of security and peace.

That the divers communions of the earth, and the manifold systems of religious belief, should never be allowed to foster the feelings of animosity among men, is, in this Day, of the essence of the Faith of God and His Religion.—*Bahá'u'lláh.*

THE UNFOLDMENT OF WORLD CIVILIZATION

By SHOGHI EFFENDI

IV

THE signs of moral downfall, as distinct from the evidences of decay in religious institutions, would appear to be no less noticeable and significant. The decline that has set in the fortunes of Islámic and Christian institutions may be said to have had its counterpart in the life and conduct of the individuals that compose them. In whichever direction we turn our gaze, no matter how cursory our observation of the doings and sayings of the present generation, we can not fail to be struck by the evidences of moral decadence which, in their individual lives no less than in their collective capacity, men and women around us exhibit.

There can be no doubt that the decline of religion as a social force, of which the deterioration of religious institutions is but an external phenomenon, is chiefly responsible for so grave, so conspicuous an evil. "*Religion,*" writes Bahá'u'lláh, "*is the greatest of all means for the establishment of order in the world and for the peaceful contentment of all that dwell therein. The weakening of the pillars of religion hath strengthened the hands of the ignorant and made them bold and arrogant. Verily I say, whatsoever hath lowered the lofty station of religion hath increased the waywardness of the wicked, and the result cannot be but anarchy.*" "*Religion,*" He, in another Tablet, has stated, "*is a radiant light and an impregnable stronghold for the protection and welfare of the peoples of the world, for the fear of God impelleth man to hold fast to that which is good, and shun all evil. Should the lamp of religion be obscured, chaos and confusion will ensue, and the lights of fairness, of justice, of tranquillity and peace cease to shine.*" "*Know thou,*" He, in yet another connection, has written, "*that they who are truly wise have likened the world unto the human temple. As the body of man needeth a garment to clothe it, so the body of mankind must needs be adorned with the mantle of justice and wisdom. Its robe is the Revelation vouchsafed unto it by God.*"

No wonder, therefore, that when,

as a result of human perversity, the light of religion is quenched in men's hearts, and the divinely appointed Robe, designed to adorn the human temple is deliberately discarded, a deplorable decline in the fortunes of humanity immediately sets in, bringing in its wake all the evils which a wayward soul is capable of revealing. The perversion of human nature, the degradation of human conduct, the corruption and dissolution of human institutions, reveal themselves, under such circumstances in their worst and most revolting aspects. Human character is debased, confidence is shaken, the nerves of discipline are relaxed, the voice of human conscience is stilled, the sense of decency and shame is obscured, conceptions of duty, of solidarity, of reciprocity and loyalty are distorted, and the very feeling of peacefulness, of joy and of hope is gradually extinguished.

Such, we might well admit, is the state which individuals and institutions alike are approaching. *"No two men,"* Bahá'u'lláh, lamenting the plight of an erring humanity, has written, *"can be found who may be said to be outwardly and inwardly united. The evidences of discord and malice are apparent everywhere, though all were made for harmony and union." "How long,"* He, in the same Tablet, exclaims, *"will humanity persist in its waywardness? How long will injustice continue? How long is chaos and confusion to reign amongst men? How long will discord agitate the face of society? The winds of despair are, alas, blowing from every direction, and the strife that divideth and afflicteth the human race is daily increasing."*

THE recrudescence of religious intolerance, of racial animosity, and of patriotic arrogance; the increasing evidences of selfishness, of suspicion, of fear and of fraud; the spread of terrorism, of lawlessness, of drunkenness and of crime; the unquenchable thirst for, and the feverish pursuit after, earthly vanities, riches and pleasures; the weakening of family solidarity; the laxity in parental control; the lapse into luxurious indulgence; the irresponsible attitude towards marriage and the consequent rising tide of divorce; the degeneracy of art and music, the infection of literature, and the corruption of the press; the extension of the influence and activities of those "prophets of decadence" who advocate companionate marriage, who preach the philosophy of nudism, who call modesty an intellectual fiction, who refuse to regard the procreation of children as the sacred and primary purpose of marriage, who denounce religion as an opiate of the people, who would, if given free rein, lead back the human race to barbarism, chaos, and ultimate extinction—these appear as the outstanding characteristics of a decadent society, a society that must be either reborn or perish.

POLITICALLY a similar decline, a no less noticeable evidence of disintegration and confusion, can be discovered in the age we live in—the age which a future historian might well recognize to have been the preamble to the Great Age, whose gold-

en days we can as yet but dimly visualize.

The passionate and violent happenings that have, in recent years, strained to almost the point of complete breakdown the political and economic structure of society are too numerous and complex to attempt, within the limitations of this general survey, to arrive at an adequate estimate of their character. Nor have these tribulations, grievous as they have been, seem to have reached their climax, and exerted the full force of their destructive power. The whole world, wherever and however we survey it, offers us the sad and pitiful spectacle of a vast, and enfeebled, and moribund organism, which is being torn politically and strangulated economically by forces it has ceased to either control or comprehend. The Great Depression, the aftermath of the severest ordeal humanity had ever experienced, the disintegration of the Versailles system, the recrudescence of militarism in its most menacing aspects, the failure of vast experiments and new-born institutions to safeguard the peace and tranquillity of peoples, classes and nations, have bitterly disillusioned humanity and prostrated its spirits. Its hopes are, for the most part, shattered, its vitality is ebbing, its life strangely disordered, its unity severely compromised.

On the continent of Europe inveterate hatreds and increasing rivalries are once more aligning its ill-fated peoples and nations into combinations destined to precipitate the most awful and implacable tribulations that mankind throughout its long record of martyrdom has suffered. On the North American continent economic distress, industrial disorganization, widespread discontent at the abortive experiments designed to readjust an ill-balanced economy, and restlessness and fear inspired by the possibility of political entanglements in both Europe and Asia, portend the approach of what may well prove to be one of the most critical phases of the history of the American Republic. Asia, still to a great extent in the grip of one of the severest trials she has, in her recent history, experienced, finds herself menaced on her eastern confines by the onset of forces that threaten to intensify the struggles which the growing nationalism and industrialization of her emancipated races must ultimately engender. In the heart of Africa, there blazes the fire of an atrocious and bloody war—a war which, whatever its outcome, is destined to exert, through its world-wide repercussions, a most disturbing influence on the races and colored nations of mankind.

With no less than ten million people under arms, drilled and instructed in the use of the most abominable engines of destruction that science has devised; with thrice that number chafing and fretting at the rule of alien races and governments; with an equally vast army of embittered citizens impotent to procure for themselves the material goods and necessities which others are deliberately destroying; with a still greater mass of human beings groaning under the burden of ever-mounting armaments, and impoverished by the virtual col-

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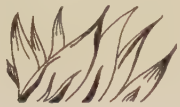
lapse of international trade—with evils such as these, humanity would seem to be definitely entering the outer fringes of the most agonizing phase of its existence.

Is it to be wondered that in the course of a recent statement made by one of the outstanding Ministers in Europe this warning should have been deliberately uttered: "If war should break out again on a major scale in Europe, it must bring the collapse of civilization as we know it in its wake. In the words of the late Lord Bryce, 'If you don't end war, war will end you.' " "Poor Europe is in a state of neurasthenia . . .", is the testimony of one of the most outstanding figures among its present-day dictators. "It has lost its recuperative power, the vital force of cohesion, of synthesis. Another war would destroy us." "It is likely," writes one of the most eminent and learned dignitaries of the Christian Church, "there will have to be one more great conflict in Europe to definitely establish once and for all an international authority. This conflict will be the most horrible of horribles, and possibly this generation will be called on to sacrifice hundreds of thousands of lives."

The disastrous failure of both the Disarmament and Economic Conferences; the obstacles confronting the negotiations for the limitation of Naval armaments; the withdrawal of two of the most powerful and heavily armed nations of the world from the activities and membership of the League of Nations; the ineptitude of the parliamentary system of government as witnessed by recent developments in Europe and America; the inability of the leaders and exponents of the Communist movement to vindicate the much-vaunted principle of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat; the perils and privations which the rulers of the Totalitarian states have, in recent years, exposed their subjects—all these demonstrate, beyond the shadow of a doubt, the impotence of present-day institutions to avert the calamities with which human society is being increasingly threatened. What else remains, a bewildered generation may well ask, that can repair the cleavage that is constantly widening, and which may, at any time, engulf it?

(*To be continued*)



SEVEN CANDLES OF UNITY

A Symposium

I. 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

By G. TOWNSHEND

"All the members of the human family, whether peoples or governments, cities or villages, have become increasingly interdependent. For none is self-sufficiency any longer possible, inasmuch as political ties unite all peoples and nations, and the bonds of trade and industry, of agriculture and education, are being strengthened every day. Hence the unity of all mankind can in this day be achieved. Verily this is none other but one of the wonders of this wondrous age, this glorious century. Of this past ages have been deprived, for this century—the century of light—has been endowed with unique and unprecedented glory, power and illumination. Hence the miraculous unfolding of a fresh marvel every day. Eventually it will be seen how bright its candles will burn in the assemblage of man.

"Behold how its light is now dawning upon the world's darkened horizon. The first candle is unity in the political realm, the early glimmerings of which can now be discerned. The second candle is unity of thought in world undertakings, the consummation of which will ere long be witnessed. The third candle is unity in freedom which will surely come to pass. The fourth candle is unity in religion which is the corner-stone of the foundation itself, and which, by the power of God, will be revealed in all its splendor. The fifth candle is the unity of nations—a unity which in this century will be securely established, causing all the peoples of the world to regard themselves as citizens of one common fatherland. The sixth candle is unity of races, making of all that dwell on earth peoples and kindreds of one race. The seventh candle is unity of language, i.e., the choice of a universal tongue in which all peoples will be instructed and converse. Each and every one of these will inevitably come to pass, inasmuch as the power of the Kingdom of God will aid and assist in their realization."—'ABDU'L-BAHÁ

To live today in deed and truth the kind of life that Jesus of Nazareth led and bade His followers lead; to love God wholeheartedly, and for God's sake to love all mankind, even one's slanderers and enemies; to give consistently good for evil, blessings for curses, kindness for cruelty and, through a career darkened along its entire length by tragic misrepresentation and persecution to preserve one's courage, one's sweetness and calm faith in God—to do all this and yet to play the man in a world of men, sharing at home and in business the common life of humanity, administering when occasion arose affairs large and small and handling complex situations with foresight and firmness—to live in such a manner throughout a long and arduous life, and when, in the fullness of time, death came, to leave to multitudes of mourners a sense of desolation and to be remembered and loved by them all as the Servant of God—to how many men (even loyal Churchmen) is such an achievement given as it has been given in this age of ours to 'Abdu'l-Bahá?

To the historian, the psychologist, the student of comparative religion, the narrative in all its aspects has much to offer of interest and value. But to the would-be Christian of the twentieth century the personal life and character of Sir Abbas Effendi (more widely known as 'Abdu'l-Bahá) make a direct and peculiar appeal.

An ordinary man who has set himself really to follow the precepts of Christ finds himself in special difficulties today. The very understanding and knowledge of the will of Christ, as well as the performance of it, seem now less easy to attain than they were for our forefathers. The accuracy of the Gospel record not only in phrase and detail, but in larger matters likewise is, however unjustifiably, questioned by a number of scholars. The record in any case is brief and fragmentary; and the utterances attributed to the Christ are not only very few but so terse and epigrammatic that their bearing is often uncertain and they admit of diverse interpretations. The problems of the contemporary world, too, are so much more complex than those of the period in which Christ lived that His words which suited so well the conditions of the past are difficult to apply to the present. Those who profess themselves the teachers of Christendom speak, as a whole, with such different voices and offer such contradictory advice that there is much bewilderment.

Guidance from both the ancient book and from living example seems, therefore, to the man in the street less easy to gain than it was once. And the natural weakness of our nature which finds so arduous the moral life demanded by Christ is no longer supported by custom and general opinion, but is, on the contrary, unhappily enervated by the influence of a self-willed and flippant age.

In the story of 'Abdu'l-Bahá the Christian comes upon something which he ardently desires and which he finds it difficult to obtain elsewhere. There awaits him here reassurance that the moral precepts

of Christ are to be accepted exactly and in their entirety, that they can be lived out as fully under modern conditions as under any other, and that the highest spirituality is quite compatible with sound commonsense and practical wisdom. Many of the incidents in 'Abdu'l-Bahá's life form a practical commentary on the teachings of Christ and dramatize the meaning of the ancient words. Being a philosopher as well as a saint, he was able to give to many a Christian inquirer explanations of the Gospel-ideal which had the simple authority both of his consistent life and of their own reasonableness.

Christ taught that the supreme human achievement is not any particular deed nor even any particular condition of mind; but a relation to God. To be completely filled—heart, mind, soul—with love for God, such is the great ideal, the Great Commandment. In 'Abdu'l-Bahá's character the dominant element was spirituality. Whatever was good in his life he attributed not to any separate source of virtue in himself but to the power and beneficence of God. His single aim was servitude to God. He rejoiced in being denuded of all earthly possessions and in being rich only in his love for God. He surrendered his freedom that he might become the bondservant of God; and was able, at the close of his days, to declare that he had spent all his strength upon the Cause of God.

To him God was the center of all existence here on earth and heretofore and hereafter. All things were in their degree mirrors of the bounty of God and outpourings of His power. Truth was the word of God. Art was the worship of God. Life was nearness to God; death remoteness from Him. The knowledge of God was the purpose of human existence and the summit of human attainment. No learning nor education that did not lead towards this knowledge was worth pursuit. Beyond it there was no further glory, and short of it there was nothing that could be called success.

In 'Abdu'l-Bahá this love for God was the ground and cause of an equanimity which no circumstance could shake and of an inner happiness which no adversity affected and which (it is said) in his presence brought to the sad, the lonely or the doubting the most precious companionship and healing. He had many griefs but they were born of his sympathy and his devotion. He knew many sorrows, but they were all those of a lover. Warmly emotional as he was he felt keenly the troubles of others, even of persons whom he had not actually met nor seen, and to his tender and responsive nature the loss of friends and the bereavements, of which he had to face more than a few, brought acute anguish. His heart was burdened always with the sense of humanity's orphanhood, and he would be so much distressed by any unkindness or discord among believers that his physical health would be affected. Yet he bore his own sufferings, however numerous and great, with unbroken strength. For forty years he endured in a Turkish prison rigors which would have killed most men in a twelvemonth. Through all this time he was, he said, supremely hap-

py, being close to God and in constant communion with Him. He made light of all his afflictions. Once, when he was paraded through the streets in chains, the soldiers, who had become his friends, wished to cover up his fetters with the folds of his garments that the populace might not see and deride, but, 'Abdu'l-Bahá shook off the covering and jangled aloud the bonds which he bore in the service of His Lord. When friends from foreign lands visited him in prison, and seeing the cruelties to which he was subjected, commiserated with him, he disclaimed their sympathy, demanded their felicitations and bade them become so firm in their love for God that they, too, could endure calamity with a radiant acquiescence. He was not really, he said, in prison; for "there is no prison but the prison of self," and since God's love filled his heart he was all the time in heaven.

From this engrossing love for God came the austere simplicity which marked 'Abdu'l-Bahá's character. Christ's manner of life had been simple in the extreme. A poor man poorly clad, often in his wanderings he had no drink but the running stream, no bed but the earth, no lamp but the stars. His teaching was given in homely phrases and familiar images, and the religion he revealed, however difficult to follow, was as plain and open as his life. His very simplicity helped to mislead his contemporaries. They could recognize the badges of greatness but not greatness itself, and they could not see light though they knew its name. He was neither Rabbi nor Sheikh, though He was the Messiah. He had neither throne nor sword, though all things in heaven and in earth were committed into his charge.

The life of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, too, was simple and severe. Familiar during much of his life with cold, hunger and all privation he chose for himself in his own home the most frugal fare. The room in which he slept (sometimes denying himself even the comforts of a bed!) served him as a work-room too. His clothing was often of the cheapest kind; and he taught his family so to dress that their apparel might be "an example to the rich and an encouragement to the poor." The household prayers which he held morning and evening were quite informal.

Partly from a natural modesty but also from a resolve to do nothing that might encourage in others a tendency to formalism, he objected to any parade or unnecessary ceremonial, particularly if he were to be concerned in it.

Even if some degree of circumstance and formality were called for, he would reduce them to the smallest possible proportions. When on April 17th, 1921, he was to receive from Lord Allenby in the grounds of the Governor's residence at Haifa the honor of Knighthood for services rendered to the Empire, he evaded the equestrian procession and military reception prepared for him by slipping unobserved from his house and making his way to the rendezvous by some unaccustomed route. When all were in perplexity and many thought that he was lost he appeared quietly at the right place and at the right time

and proceeded in the prescribed manner with the essential part of the ceremony.

Of all material things, as of food, clothing, shelter, he sought and desired for himself the barest sufficiency. But asceticism was not part of his creed nor of his teaching. "Others may sleep on soft pillows; mine must be a hard one," he said once in declining a kind friend's offer of some little comfort for his room. Men were to take what God had given them, and to enjoy the good things of nature: but with renunciation. Fasting was a symbol, and as such had high value, but in itself was no virtue: "God has given you an appetite," he said; "eat." Riches he thought no blessing; if they had been, Christ would have been rich. The poverty, however, which he inculcated was not impecuniousness but the heart's poverty of him who is so rich in love for God that he is destitute of all desire for aught else.

He was the most unassuming of men. He counted himself personally as less than others, put himself below them and served them in every way he could find with unaffected humility. He used to entertain at his table visitors from far and near; but if the occasion were one of special importance he would rise and wait on his guests with his own hands—a practice he recommended to other hosts.

When his father was alive and dwelt outside Akká among the mountains, 'Abdu'l-Bahá used frequently to visit Him, and though the way was long he habitually went on foot. His friends asked him why he did not spare himself so much time and effort and go on horseback. "Over these mountains Jesus walked on foot," he said, "and who am I that I should ride where the Lord Christ walked?"

But this humility did not come from any weakness. It was a proof of his strength and a cause of his spiritual power. Once when a child asked him why all the rivers of the earth flowed into the ocean he said: "Because it sets itself lower than them all and so draws them to itself. Pride repels; humility attracts." When commenting on Christ's direction to be as little children, he emphasized the fact that the virtues of children are due to weakness, and adults must learn to have these virtues through strength. A palsied arm cannot strike an angry blow; but the virtue of forbearance belongs to one who can, but will not. His humility was not due to any diffidence or other failing. Nor did it imply any self-abasement or self-depreciation. What it meant was the obliteration of the personal self. His separate ego had no existence at all save only as an instrument of expression for the higher self that was one with God.

Somebody who knew him in the West remarked that he was always master of the situation, and amid the novel and alien surroundings of such cities as London, Chicago and New York he preserved his self-possession and his power. On one occasion in America, when he arrived at a house where he was to be a guest at luncheon, a colored man called on him just before the meal hour. Being known to the hostess the caller was

admitted, but 'Abdu'-Bahá observed that, according to the prevailing social custom, there was no intention of admitting him to sit at the table with the regular guests. Now race-prejudice is what 'Abdu'l-Bahá could not tolerate. At his own table members of all races and religion met on an equality as brothers. He was not going to countenance it among his friends in America if he could help it. What was the surprise of the hostess and of everyone else present when he was observed clearing a place beside him and calling for knives and forks for the new arrival. Before any seemly way of countering Abbas Effendi's initiative was found, before anyone had quite realized how it had happened, the lady found herself doing what neither she nor any other hostess in her position would have dreamed of doing and entertaining at her table with her white friends a negro. 'Abdu'l-Bahá has become the spiritual host. He spread before those who sat with him the sense of the common Fatherhood of God. Such was his radiant power that the unconventional challenging meal passed off without unpleasantness or embarrassment to any who partook of it.

When he was traveling in the West it was his custom to take out with him a bag of silver pieces to give to the poor whom he met; and being brought down one evening to the Bowery Mission in New York he delivered there one of the most compassionate and moving of his addresses. It reads in part as follows:

"Tonight I am very happy for I have come here to meet my friends. I consider you my relatives, my companions, and I am your comrade. You must be thankful to God that you are poor, for His Holiness Jesus Christ has said 'Blessed are the poor.' He never said 'Blessed are the rich.' He said too that the Kingdom is for the poor. Therefore you must be thankful to God that though in this world you are indigent yet the treasures of God are within your reach; and although in the material realm you are poor, yet in the Kingdom of God you are precious. His Holiness Jesus Himself was poor. He did not belong to the rich. He passed His time in the desert traveling among the poor, and lived upon the herbs of the field. He had no place to lay His head; no home, yet He chose this rather than riches. It was the poor who accepted Him first, not the rich. Therefore you are the disciples of Jesus; you are His comrades, your lives are similar to His life, your attitude is like unto His, you resemble Him more than the rich. Therefore we will thank God that we have been so blest with real riches and, in conclusion, I ask you to accept 'Abdu'l-Bahá as your servant."

At the end of the meeting 'Abdu'l-Bahá stood at the Bowery entrance to the Mission Hall shaking hands with from four to five hundred men and placing within each palm a piece of silver.

With no less tenderness he answered the need of those whose poverty was spiritual. His guards and jailers, servants of a cruel and despotic master, were won by his kindness and became his friends. "What is there about him," people would say, "that he makes his enemies his

friends?"

Towards those who displayed to him personal ill-will and malice he showed forebearance and generosity. Missionary work, he said, is not promoted by being overbearing and harsh; bad people are not to be won to God by criticisms and rebukes, nor by returning to them evil for evil. On the contrary, the cause of God advances through courtesy and kindness, and the bad are conquered by intercession on their behalf and by sincere, unflagging love. "When you meet a thought of hate overcome it with a stronger thought of love."

CHRIST's command to love one's enemies was not obeyed by assuming love nor by acting as though one loved them; for this would be hypocrisy. It was only obeyed when genuine love was felt. When asked how it was possible to love those who were hostile or personally repugnant, he said that love could be true yet indirect. One may love a flower not only for itself but for the sake of someone who sent it. One may love a house because of one who dwells in it. A letter coming from a friend may be precious though the envelope which held it was torn and soiled. So one may love sinners for the sake of the universal Father, and may show kindness to them as to children who need training, to sick persons who need medicine, to wanderers who need guidance. "Treat the sinners, the tyrants, the bloodthirsty enemies as faithful friends and confidants," he would say, "Consider not their deeds; consider only God." His kindness was persistent and unflagging: he forgave until seventy times seven. A neighbor of his in Haifa, a self-righteous Mussulman from Afghanistan, who regarded 'Abdu'l-Bahá as an outcast, pursued him for years with hate and scorn. When he met 'Abdu'l-Bahá on the street he would draw aside his robes that he might not be contaminated by touching a renegade. He received kindnesses with obdurate ill-will. Help in misfortune, food when he was hungry, medicine in sickness, the services of a physican, personal visits —all made no impression on his hardened heart. But 'Abdu'l-Bahá did not relax nor despair. For five and twenty years he returned continuously good for evil; and then suddenly the man's long hate broke down, his heart warmed, his spirit awoke, and with tears of disillusion and remorse he bowed in homage before the goodness that had mastered him.

Even with enemies much more dangerous and cruel than this poor Afghan 'Abdu'l-Bahá showed the same forbearance and good-will. He would suffer or invite any personal loss or humiliation rather than miss an opportunity of doing a kindness to an enemy; he would suffer calamity in order to avoid doing something which might be to the spiritual detriment of an ill-wisher. When 'Abdu'l-Bahá had been liberated, the misrepresentations of a secret enemy resulted in his reimprisonment. He might probably have secured his release by a special appeal; but he declined to take this action. He went back to the prison and was held there for years, one reason for this nonresistance to evil being that the suc-

cess of his appeal would but deepen the envy and degradation of his enemy: "He must know that I will be the first to forgive him." In this submissiveness he acted in the same spirit as his Father in parallel circumstances. For during the period when a certain jealous member of their entourage was by various means covertly seeking his life, Bahá-'u'lláh and all the members of His family, including His eldest son, remained (so Professor Cheyne records) on cordial relations with him, admitting him as before to their company, even though they thus afforded him further opportunities of pursuing his deadly designs.

So confident were all who knew 'Abdu'l-Bahá that they could count on his largeness of mind that even the Shah of Persia, when in extremity and threatened with revolution, stooped to ask the advice of the man he had kept in prison for a lifetime, and received an assurance that if he would end despotism and establish a constitution he might count on a happy reign, but that if he persisted in his present path he would be dethroned. The Shah neglected the counsel and brought down upon himself the fate from which his generous prisoner would have shielded him.

From his foot one may reconstruct Hercules, and from a few words and incidents one may reconstruct a character. Which among us (though our advantage be much greater and our trials much fewer) can boast such a measure of Christ-like attributes as 'Abdu'l-Bahá? He was no Churchman; yet his qualities exemplify and perhaps clarify the Christian ideal of manhood and help to prove for those who need such proof, how that ideal applies to modern as truly as to ancient conditions of life and is no less within the reach of active men today than it was in simpler times gone by.

Man cannot live singly and alone. He is in need of continuous cooperation and mutual help. For example, a man living alone in the wilderness will eventually starve. He can never, singly and alone, provide himself with all the necessities of existence. Therefore, he is in need of cooperation and reciprocity.

The mystery of this phenomenon, the cause thereof is this, that mankind has been created from one single origin, has branched off from one family. Thus in reality all mankind represents one family.

—*'Abdu'l-Bahá*

A DIVINE TRUST

By 'Abdu'l-Bahá

The wisdom of the appearance of the spirit in the body is this: the human spirit is a Divine Trust, and it must traverse all conditions; for its passage and movement through the conditions of existence will be the means of its acquiring perfections. So, when a man travels and passes through different regions and numerous countries with system and method, it is certainly a means of his acquiring perfection; for he will see places, scenes, and countries from which he will discover the conditions and states of other nations. He will thus become acquainted with the geography of countries, and their wonders and arts; he will familiarize himself with the habits, customs, and usages of peoples; he will see the civilization and progress of the epoch; he will become aware of the policy of governments, and the power and capacity of each country. It is the same when the human spirit passes through the conditions of existence: it will become the possessor of each degree and station. Even in the condition of the body it will surely acquire perfections.

Besides this, it is necessary that the signs of the perfection of the spirit should be apparent in this world, so that the world of creation may bring forth endless results, and this body may receive life and manifest the divine bounties. So, for example, the rays of the sun must shine upon the earth, and the solar heat develop the earthly beings; if the rays and heat of the sun did not shine upon the earth, the earth would be uninhabited, without meaning, and its development would be retarded. In the same way, if the perfections of the spirit did not appear in this world, this world would be unenlightened and absolutely brutal. By the appearance of the spirit in the physical form, this world is enlightened. As the spirit of man is the cause of the life of the body, so the world is in the condition of the body, and man is in the condition of the spirit. If there were no man, the perfections of the spirit would not appear, and the light of the mind would not be resplendent in this world. This world would be like a body without a soul.

This world is also in the condition of a fruit-tree, and man is like the fruit; without fruit the tree would be useless.

Moreover, these members, these elements, this composition, which are found in the organism of man, are an attraction and magnet for the spirit; it is certain that the spirit will appear in it. So, a mirror which is clear will certainly attract the rays of the sun. It will become luminous, and wonderful images will appear in it. That is to say, when these existing elements are gathered together according to the natural order, and with perfect strength, they become a magnet for the spirit, and the spirit will become manifest in them with all its perfections.

Under these conditions it cannot be said "what is the necessity for the rays of the sun to descend upon the mirror?" for the connection which exists between the reality of things, whether they be spiritual or material, requires that when the mirror is clear and faces the sun, the light of the sun must become apparent in it. In the same way, when the elements are arranged and combined in the most glorious system, organization and manner, the human spirit will appear and be manifest in them.

This is the decree of the Powerful, the Wise.

CHALICE OF PRAYER

By Alice Simmons Cox

Consider ye the lilies of the river:
Clean-washed to meet the early-rising sun,
Resplendent cups uplifted to their giver,
As pure as kingly prayer of Solomon.

His wisdom ask they not, but shining glory,
Hearts of gold and clear-hued waxen dress,
A beauty of their own to tell the story
Of sunlight with its warm and fond caress.

How pure should be my prayers today, how simple,
Within my hands an empty shining cup,
My heart reserved for sunshine,—clean and ample,
To know the Spirit's bounty, from it sup!

Consider ye the souls of men: their beauty
Enshrined in calyx through the chill of night,
Oft buffeted by waves, by erring duty,
Till, seeking love, they rise to meet God's Light.

T. G. MASARYK

By Martha L. Root

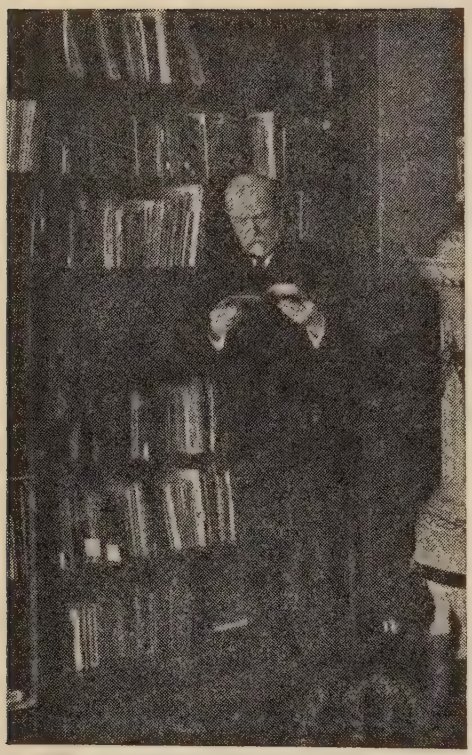
An Interview

Honorary President T. G. Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, one of the world's greatest scholar-philosopher-statesmen who has always been "on the right side" in helping to bring into reality a new world order, is a deeply spiritual man. If one asks about his religion, know that it is to be found in each and every one of his many books: the whole foundation of his life, of his philosophy, of his statesmanship is based upon pure, liberal religion—that only as we live as an eternal soul among other eternal souls can we live fully and really: and the Eternal God will not be indifferent to the eternals here!

President Masaryk has one of the finest private religious libraries in the world, and this splendid collection of books, one hundred thousand volumes, will find their homes in a new Masaryk Institute which is to be built very soon in Praha. This Institute, too, will be a living force to promote the President's high aims for religion, philosophy, democracy and cosmopolitan culture for all humanity. As a Bahá'í, the writer was very pleased that President Masaryk has in this library each new book that appears about the Bahá'í Faith. He has studied carefully "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era," "Bahá'í Scriptures" and several Works of Bahá'u'lláh, and he has taken a keen interest in "The Bahá'í World" volumes, all five of which are in his library.

The Bahá'í principles of universal education, universal peace, a universal auxiliary language, and a Universal League of Nations, he considers are a way to promote the peace of the world and the tranquillity of the nations. A short foreword of what President Masaryk said of these principles has appeared in the Czech, Serbian and Rumanian editions of the book "Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era."

The President's views on peace, justice, capital punishment and his words on life after death are all "light-bearing" (Bahá'í) in spirit. For example, the other day he said: "I am not thinking so much about death and what will follow, but of



THOMAS G. MASARYK

life and its contents. For me immortality is a consequence of the riches and dignity of the human life and the soul. The immortality of soul follows from the recognition of God, from faith in the universal order of justice. There would be no justice, no perfect equality without the eternity of the souls." President Masaryk also said that immortality is being lived even now in this life. We have no experience of life after death, but we have and can have an experience even now that life which is seriously and truly lived is really *subspecie aeterni.*

Speaking on this same subject (and it is quoted in his new book, "President Masaryk Tells His Story") he says: "Many people are afraid of death, but they take no account of the fact that they themselves and many others like them are really only living half a life, empty, loveless, without real happiness. By recognizing truth, by ordering our life morally, by loving actively, we can have a share of eternity in this life of ours, we can prolong our own life not by days or years, but by eternity!"

This "Father of his country," Head of his State, teacher and philosopher of his nation, and European collaborator for mutual justice, conciliation and solidarity, says there is a dream which comes to him: "I do not know how I came to have it," he says, "perhaps it is a recollection of some picture—I see a ship on the sea and an angel bending over it with an hour-glass; and every now and then a drop runs down from the hour-glass into the sea, and the angel says: 'Another minute passed away!' I always think of that dream as a warning; work, do something, while your minutes are passing!"

And President Masaryk works!

THE CIVILIZING ELEMENT

By Alice J. Robertson

The roads to truth are various and devious. Man has ill understood himself and his world. He has suffered not alone from profound ignorance of nature and its surroundings, but likewise from fantastic and tortuous meanderings in the field of his emotions.

He has felt, violently or pleasurably, and has let that feeling and prejudice color his reactions. That these reactions may be the result mainly of superstition and fear, has deterred him not one whit from the path of his opinions.

Under the various layers of his consciousness, the tiny maggot of dissatisfaction moves, insistently, irritatingly, until in sheer defense against any further encroachment of truth or knowledge, the struggling mind forms, like the oyster with its grain of sand, the pearl that is the living symbol of mankind's unconscious resistence to everything resembling progress.

We succeed mainly in spite of ourselves. When we contemplate the calamitous derangement of human affairs which now pervades the civilized world, and is prevalent in all countries, including our own, "even the best minds," as Dr. James Harvey Robinson so succinctly points out, "are puzzled and uncertain in their attempts to grasp the situation. The world seems to demand a moral and economic regeneration which it is dangerous to postpone but as yet impossible to imagine, let alone direct. The preliminary intellectual regeneration which would put our leaders in a position to determine and control the course of affairs, has not taken place. We have unprecedented conditions to deal with and novel adjustments to make. We also have an immense stock of scientific knowledge unknown to our grandfathers with which to operate."

So novel are the conditions, so copious the knowledge, that we must undertake the arduous task of reconsidering a great part of the opinions about man and his relations to his fellow-men which have been handed down to us by previous generations who lived in far other conditions and possessed far less information about the world and themselves. It seems

to me that history at least can shed a great deal of light on our present predicaments and confusions.

I do not mean by history that chronicle of facts and remote events with their conventional chronology of causes and effects, but rather that study of how man has come to be as he is, and to believe as he does. In brief, what Dr. Robinson summarizes as, "the knowledge of man, of the springs of his conduct, of his relation to his fellow men singly or in groups, and the felicitous regulation of human intercourse in the interest of harmony and fairness."

We may review history in the light of what things once were in order to correctly perceive how they now are. This is the only kind of knowledge that matters for it is what comes after that is the direct product of what has come before, and it is the check rule by which we may plainly estimate what we ourselves are, "and what are our possibilities of achievement, our frustrations and perplexities; our debt to the past is indisputable, the old is the indispensable foundation."

CIVILIZATION is cyclic and moves with the clock-wise precision of Time. And civilizations are the unending stories of men and their struggles against our animal inheritance in our blind up-struggle towards the light.

The supreme factor in our historical evolution is the civilizing element of Religion.

Now it is an irrefutable fact that the old is the essential foundation of the new. Without it, as has been indicated, advance in knowledge and human improvement would be impossible.

"Father Time," says Dr. Robinson, "is the benefactor to whom we literally owe everything, but he is exceedingly jealous of his established scheme of things. . . . How instructive is our annual symbolism as we reach December 31. The old year makes his bow to the newborn and totters off to the grave. Within a twelve-month the baby goes the way of his hoary predecessor. We cannot start anew on January 1, or any other day. This truth historians dignify as the 'continuity of history.' "

But history as we have pointed out is more than a mere chronicle of man's failures and successes, his battles and his governments, his losses and his triumphs; history is also the record of our moral and intellectual development, and of our spiritual evolution.

Coeval with the evolution of man's physical body was the development of his spiritual consciousness. This development was not hap-hazard, it was steady, successive, cumulative. It was the other wing whereby the bird of his soul would soar aloft. There has been always this continuity of history, there has likewise always been this continuity of religious revelation. The one, is the epic of what man was, and what he has become; the other is the epic of what man is, and of what he will be.

BY himself alone man would have progressed but little farther than the animal. He would possess his own naked equipment and efforts. But he would have started with no

more than the ape is able to know. He would necessarily be self taught. Like his brutish brethren he would subsist upon raw fruit berries, and roots, and insects. And his mind would correspond with his brutish state. He would learn by fumbling and by forming accidental associations. As one eminent historian puts it, "He (man) had impulses and such sagacity as he individually derived from experience, but no heritage of knowledge accumulated by the group and transmitted by education. This heritage had to be constructed on man's potentialities." And again, "Man started at a cultural zero and had to find out everything for himself. Or rather, a very small number of peculiarly restless and adventurous spirits did the work. The great mass of humanity has never had anything to do with the increase of intelligence except to act as its medium of transfusion and perpetuation. Creative intelligence is confined to the very few, but the many avail themselves of the more obvious achievements of those who are exceptionally highly endowed."

Professor Giddings recently asked "why has there been any history?" Which is another way of asking how could mankind being what it is, produce anything so disturbing as change, or creative as progress?

Civilizations then have been due mainly to the efforts of the few, to that small number of seers who have and do appear at the beginning of each evolutionary epoch, and who as bearers of the creative word itself have transformed men and instigated new religious cycles.

Civilization is progressive and continuous, this is true likewise of religion.

But religious truth, as Shoghi Effendi points out, is relative not absolute. Bahá'u'lláh explains this connection. "In every Dispensation the light of Divine Revelation has been vouchsafed to men in direct proportion to their spiritual capacity. Consider the sun. How feeble its rays the moment it appeareth above the horizon. How gradually its warmth and potency increases as it approacheth its zenith, enabling meanwhile all created things to adapt themselves to the growing intensity of its light. How steadily it declines until it reacheth its setting point. Were it all of a sudden to manifest the energies latent within it, it would no doubt cause injury to all created things. In like manner, if the sun of Truth were suddenly to reveal, at the earliest stages of its manifestation, the full measure of the potencies which the providence of the Almighty hath bestowed upon it, the earth of human understanding would waste away and be consumed; for men's hearts would neither sustain the intensity of its revelation, nor be able to mirror forth the radiance of its light."

Religious systems like human systems have their periods of incubation, growth and decay. But even as the "child succumbs in the youth and youth in the man; yet neither child nor youth perishes," so do these divinely revealed religions complete their span, and inaugurate those historical crises which are in reality the

transition points between the old and the new, between the dying and the living.

Such a crisis came with the inauguration of Christianity in the appearance of his holiness The Christ, with the ensuing cataclysmic change, which brought about the fall of the Roman Empire in the West. Dare one say that the ensuing civilization with its beneficent changes and thousand years of development, is not a step upwards and onward in the development of man's cosmic consciousness?

TODAY we stand again upon the threshold of a new world order. And once again those same forces of destruction and change are at work about us. Once again we see a world in travail, and our human institutions "so slowly and laboriously impugned." We see, as G. Stanley Hall so eloquently appeals, "every consensus challenged, every creed flouted. . . . Old beacon lights have shifted or gone out. Some of the issues we lately thought to be minor have taken on cosmic proportions. We are 'up against' questions too big for us, so that there is everywhere a sense of insufficiency which is too deep to be fully deployed in the narrow field of consciousness. Hence, there is a new discontent with old leaders, standards, criteria, methods, and values, and a demand everywhere for new ones, a realization that mankind must now reorient itself and take its bearings from the eternal stars, and sail no longer into the unknown future by the dead reckonings of the past."

"The world is passing through the gravest crisis in the history of civilization," says another. As long ago as the South African war, Thomas Hardy asked:

"When shall the saner softer polities,
Whereof we dream, have sway in each proud land,
And patriotism grown God-like, scorn to stand
Bond slave to realms, but circle earth and seas?"

"Never indeed have there been such wide-spread and basic upheavals, whether in the social, economic or political spheres of human activity as those now going on in different parts of the world. Never have there been so many and varied sources of danger as these that now threaten the structure of society", asserts Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith.

IT is estimated that during the World War nearly sixty million men were mobilized, of these nearly eight million were killed in battle and over eighteen million wounded; of those who recovered perhaps a quarter or more were permanently mutilated or crippled. The losses among the civilian population were tremendous; owing to disease, famine, massacres, nearly seventeen millions of souls were sacrificed on the altar of man's selfishness and greed. As H. M. Tomlinson bitterly protests in "Mars his Idiot," "We can salvage gold sunk twenty fathoms in the sea, but not the values latent in badly nurtured children living in neighboring streets. And the mind of man,

the origin of the machines and of the society which arose about them and moves to the rhythm and speed of the wheels, is now of less account than the power it created. What does it profit him then to have dominion of the earth?"

We see on every hand the clear evidence of change. In the social, political, economic and religious spheres of human activity, the disquieting reagent is at work. Chaos and distress have taken the place of mastery. We are shaken by terrors and passions that are beyond our control. We wander in a mist, as yet but half aware of those creative energies released by the vitalizing power of spiritual regeneration "The call of God," 'Abdu'l-Bahá has written, "when raised, breathed a new life into the body of mankind, and infused a new spirit into the whole creation."

The release of cosmic energies by virtue of their very properties is bound to cause disturbance. Bahá'u'lláh nearly fifty years ago had written, "The world's equilibrium hath been upset through the vibrating influence of this most great, this new world order. Mankind's ordered life hath been revolutionized through the agency of this unique, this wondrous system, the like of which mortal eyes have never witnessed." We stand on the threshold of a new era of human history, man has reached that period in his development when he must put aside the swaddling clothes of infancy, and the impatient recklessness of adolescence, and assume the responsibilities and privileges of maturity.

"That which was applicable to human needs during the early history of the race," explains 'Abdu'l-Bahá, "can neither meet nor satisfy the demands of this day, this period of newness and consummation. Humanity has emerged from its former state of limitation and preliminary training. Man must now become imbued with new virtues and powers, new moral standards, new capacities."

Challenging indeed is the voice of Ralph Waldo Emerson that thrills through these words: "In this kingdom of illusions we grope eagerly for stays and foundations. There is none but a strict and faithful dealing at home, and a severe barring out of all duplicity or illusion there. Whatever games are played with us, we must play no games with ourselves, but deal in our privacy with the last honesty and truth. I look upon the simple and childish virtues of veracity and honesty as the root of all that is sublime in character. Speak as you think, be what you are, pay your debts of all kinds. I prefer to be owned as sound and solvent, and my word as good as my bond, and to be what cannot be skipped, or dissipated, or undermined, to all the *éclat* in the universe. This reality is the foundation of friendship, religion, poetry, and art. At the top or the bottom of all illusions, I set the cheat which still leads us to work and live for appearances, in spite of our conviction, in all sane hours, that it is what we really are that avails with friends, with strangers, and with fate or fortune."

From the eloquent pen of that scholar and philosopher, Sir Arthur

Eddington, comes this prophetic statement and credo, "Man is the typical custodian of certain qualities or illusions, which make a vital difference to the significance of things. He displays purpose in an inorganic world of chance. He can represent truth, righteousness, sacrifice. In him there flickers for a few brief years a spark from the divine spirit. Are these of as little account in the universe as he is? When we go right back to the beginning, the first thing we must recognize in the world of experience is something intent on truth—something to which it matters intensely that beliefs should be true. For whatever else there may be in our nature, responsibility towards truth is one of its attributes. It has to do with conscience rather than with consciousness. Concern with truth is one of those things which make up the spiritual nature of man. The question 'is it true?' changes the complexion of the world of experience, not because it is asked about the world, but because it is asked in the world. It is by looking into our own nature that we first discover the failure of the physical universe to be coextensive with our experience of reality."

"The Faith of Bahá'u'lláh," states Shoghi Effendi with impelling logic in his most recent exposition of the Bahá'í Faith, "has, in addition to these tendencies and activities which its evolution is now revealing, demonstrated, in other spheres, and wherever the illumination of its light has penetrated, the force of its cohesive strength, of its integrating power, of its invincible spirit." He further elucidates, and with considerable detail and analysis the various material instruments designed to "safeguard and regulate" the life of its institutions; he elaborates upon its functions and resources, stressing especially the Creative power of a faith that possesses the vitality and inherent capacity "to counteract the disrupting influences to which religious systems, moral standards, and political and social institutions are being subjected."

The integrating element of religion—that molder of man's destiny—which will inaugurate a world civilization and culture is already working like a leaven. The scope and force of its synchronizing power extends, according to Shoghi Effendi in this same potent treatise: "From Iceland to Tasmania, from Vancouver to the China Sea spreads the radiance and extend the ramification of this world-enfolding System, this many-hued and firmly-knit Fraternity, infusing into every man and woman it has won to its cause a faith, a hope, and a vigor that a wayward generation has long lost, and is powerless to recover. They who preside over the immediate destinies of this troubled world, they who are responsible for its chaotic state, its fears, its doubts, its miseries will do well, in their bewilderment, to fix their gaze and ponder in their hearts upon the evidences of this saving grace of the Almighty that lies within their reach—a grace that can ease their burden, resolve their perplexities, and illuminate their path."

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Edited by BERTHA HYDE KIRKPATRICK

There is reason to believe that we may occupy at present the highest position in the universe with respect to intelligent life.

Does it seem, then, too bold to assume that the intelligent Creator, whose existence seems by far the most reasonable basis for accounting for our world, should take an active interest in the welfare of the perhaps uniquely intelligent beings He created?

The remarkable course of evolution, leading as it has, against tremendous odds, to organisms with the modicum of intelligence that we possess, really seems to point in that direction. . . .

In such attributes as clarity of reason, appreciation of beauty or consideration of our fellows, our remote descendants may be expected to excel us as greatly as we are in advance of the Java apeman.—From a recent address by Dr. Arthur Compton.

The Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh . . . should, if we be faithful to its implications, be regarded as signalizing through its advent the *coming of age of the entire human race*.—Shoghi Effendi.

There is a mysterious cycle in human events. To some generations much is given. Of others much is expected. This generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny. —President Roosevelt.

May America become the distributing center of spiritual enlightenment and all the world receive this heavenly blessing. For America has developed powers and capacities greater and more wonderful than other nations.—'Abdu'l-Bahá.

Freedom, like intimacy, is early an object of passionate desire and is frequently pursued into wrong ground; for freedom is not to be found in any accident or adjustment of the circumstances of life, but only in willing realization and acceptance of the conditions under which life is carried on. As experience broadens, the rigor of these conditions in general is made manifest, and in particular the limitations of that personality, which had once seemed so free, become familiar. This growing familiarity with the nature of human personality, breeds, or should breed, a detachment, a stoicism, an autarcheia in the perfection of which alone true liberty is found.—From *A Journey From Peking*.

The liberty that profiteth you is to be found nowhere except in complete servitude unto God, the Eternal Truth. Whoso hath tasted of its sweetness will refuse to barter it for all the dominion of earth and heaven. —Bahá'u'lláh.

BOOK REVIEW

By Oscar Newfang

Sweden: The Middle Way, by Marquis W. Childs. Yale University Press.

In the United States monopolies have been prevented from exploiting the masses of the population through anti-trust laws and by means of stringent governmental regulation of all business which is granted an exclusive franchise or which has become so dominant in its field that the courts have declared it affected with a public interest. The government aims to restrict all such enterprises to a reasonable return on the invested capital and so to prevent them from holding up the entire population through excessive prices for the purpose of obtaining an exorbitant yield on their investments.

Sweden being a small country, and the trusts or cartels in Europe covering practically the entire continent, the method adopted in the United States for preventing the oppression of monopoly was not feasible there. Sweden, therefore, adopted the cooperative system originally established in Rochdale, England, by which the consumers of a country are organized and by their great purchasing power are able to command reasonable prices for commodities. In cases where a monopoly, like that of the General Electric Company in the manufacture of electric bulbs, defied the demand of the consumers' Cooperative Union for reasonable prices and insisted upon holding up the entire population of the country, the cooperative association established its own factory; and although the price of lamps was by this means radically reduced to the consumer, the cooperative was still able to earn a reasonable yield upon its investment.

The same procedure was followed when the consumers found the price of bread unreasonably high because of the combination of the flour millers. The cooperative union bought the Three Crown Mills at Stockholm, fitted it up as the finest flour mill in the country, and caused the price of bread throughout the country to come down to a reasonable figure and stay there.

The Consumers' Cooperative Union in Sweden has grown to such an extent that about one-third of the retail business of the country is transacted in its stores. As the principles of the Rochdale cooperative system, which are generally adopted by cooperatives in all countries, are not well known in the United States, a word of explanation may be in order. The capital needed to begin operations is supplied by the members. It is allowed interest at a low rate, and the remaining profits of business are divided among the members in ac-

cordance with the amount of their purchases, all business being done on a strictly cash basis at current market prices. In the management each member has one vote regardless of the amount of his investment: in other words, in the cooperative the workers hire capital, while in private business capital hires the workers. The cooperative system stresses human interest, private business stresses property interest.

The author gives an amusing illustration of this in his account of the breaking of the power of the lamp trust in Sweden. When the trust heard that the cooperative intended to build a rival lamp factory, it threatened to "dump" lamps into Sweden until the new company should be bankrupted and driven out of business. Hedberg, the representative of the cooperative, said: "We don't mind your dumping lamps into Sweden. If you want to sell the Swedish people lamps below cost, or even give them away, we shall applaud. "But," said the trust representative, "I suppose you would like to get interest on your capital?" "Surely," said Hedberg, "but our capital belongs to the consumers. The money that Swedish consumers invest in an electric lamp factory is amply remunerated by a reduction in lamp prices." "But prices may go very low in Sweden,—see? And that won't please any of us." "Why not? Our principal desire and object is to get prices down. You and I represent two totally different interests, so that we have great difficulty in understanding each other. You want prices up, we want them down: you want to benefit stockholders, we want to benefit consumers."

The cooperative system, however, is not the whole story of the middle way, as exemplified in Mr. Childs' picture of Sweden. *The sympathy of the government of Sweden is with the humble consumer; not, as it has too often been in the United States, with the comparatively rich producer.* For that reason Sweden has gone much farther than our American New Deal in the matter of government "yard-sticks" meant to hold prices to the consumer to a reasonable level. Especially solicitous is the Swedish government to prevent the natural resources of the country from falling into the hands of monopolists who would exploit the people. The industry of forestry, which is one of the greatest in Sweden, is largely owned and operated by the government, and it is not operated on the ruinous basis of denuding the country of its timber without reforestation, as is the case in the United States, but on the sound economic basis of replacing all timber cut by fresh planting, thus preserving for future generations a fundamentally important resource which we in this country are squandering without enough thought of the future.

Sweden is richly endowed with water power, and all the water-falls in the country are controlled by the Royal Board of Waterfalls, which has built and is still building an elaborate power system which compels private power systems to keep their rates within reason. As a consequence, utility rates in Sweden are the lowest in Europe. The same "yard-stick" idea is applied to the

railroads. The government owns and operates an important system of trunk lines with such a degree of efficiency that the private companies are compelled to make very moderate rates to meet its competition, again benefitting the consumers to a marked degree.

In several other fields the Swedish government shows great sympathy for the consumer, for the man of small means. Thus there is an elaborate system of cooperative housing which, through the assistance of the government in making loans at a low rate of interest, enables the working man to rent a home or an apartment of good quality for as little as $120 a year. The popularity of the cooperative housing scheme is shown by the fact that 65,000 out of Stockholm's population of about 500,000 live in cooperative houses or apartments.

In the neighboring Denmark, to which the author devotes a chapter, the government cooperates with the farmers in the purchase of small farms, loaning the would-be farm-owner as much as 90 per cent of the cost of his farm at a very low rate of interest and amortizing the debt over a long period of years, at the end of which the farmer owns his homestead free of debt.

It will be noted that this middle way between rugged individualism and collectivism in Sweden is based upon the peculiar national temperament of the Swede, who is cautious and conservative, placing greater emphasis upon saving more money, rather than upon making more money. The bold and adventurous temperament of America, on the other hand, places far more stress upon making more money, and rather scorns the idea of skimping to save more. This is one reason why the consumers' cooperatives have made so much less progress in the United States than they have in Sweden. In this country probably not more than 2 per cent of the retail business is done by cooperatives, as against 33 per cent in Sweden.

Dispute not with any one concerning the things of this world and its affairs, for God hath abandoned them to such as have set their affection upon them. Out of the whole world He hath chosen for Himself the hearts of men—hearts which the hosts of revelation and of utterance can subdue.

—*Bahá'u'lláh*